



Finding Sources of Support for Job-Embedded Professional Development

Why go this route?

- Because job-embedded professional development results in identifying needs for content or skill-building, which may call for outside expertise.
- Because sometimes increasing student achievement depends on bringing fresh research, knowledge or skills into the learning community.
- Because when we bring in outside “experts,” it is important to focus our time with them on bringing their expertise to bear on OUR needs in our situation.

You’ll know you’ve arrived when...

- Groups of teachers request outside expertise to meet the needs they have identified in their professional learning communities (PLCs).
- The PLCs review offerings from various providers (i.e., regional service agencies or intermediate school districts, teacher preparation institutions, private vendors, professional associations, conference offerings, online sources, etc.) to find best source of expertise.
- Informed follow-up has been planned to ensure that PLCs get practice and feedback as they begin to use the new content or skill.
- Groups of teachers become experts themselves and offer to provide examples of their learning to others within their building, district, and across districts.

Construction Zone

Getting an outside expert to provide professional development works best when staff has been involved in the choice to do so. Consider asking your Professional Development Committee to do this selection and management work for you.

It’s about TIME


- Needs analysis may already have been part of the school improvement planning process. If not, this may take 1-3 days.
- Prioritizing and clarifying steps might need a 1-hour Professional Development Committee meeting.
- Identifying a pool of providers will take 1-2 hours on the phone.
- Interviewing three providers could take an hour each.
- Agreeing with your finalist about services to expect and documenting those services will take another 1-2 hours.

Potential COSTS

- Expert fees vary from \$500 to \$3,000 per day.
- Snacks at \$3/participant or meals at \$6–10/participant.
- Materials and copies as needed.

The Process

*A step-by-step guide for
finding sources of support for
job-embedded professional
development*

NOTE: Steps marked with a  are accompanied by one or more inserts, included in this packet.

- 1 Look at available data** to assess your professional development needs, based on desired student outcomes.
Your School Improvement Plan should include this analysis.
- 2 Reflect together on what has worked well** in your experience with professional development.
INSERT for Step 2 offers some questions for reflection.
- 3 Prioritize the professional development needs** that grow from your improvement plan.
Take this step very seriously. It deserves more than just checking which topics are most popular. INSERT for Step 3 suggests a worksheet to help you weigh and rank your “shopping list”.
- 4 Clarify what you’re looking for in an outside provider.**
Determine what type of consultant you’re in the market for. Do you want a SPECIALIST or a COACH?
SPECIALISTS come prepared to teach a particular approach, skill or tool. They do relatively short-term work when you know what you want to learn. On the other hand, COACHES or partners engage for longer periods of time, and work with you to help determine what the best approach, tool or strategy might be. The two may not always distinguish themselves clearly, but if you’re clear about your need, you can ask for what you want. INSERT for Step 4 offers a checklist to help you analyze your situation.
- 5 Compile a list of providers** that fit your need for outside expertise.
The back page of this wrapper lists “Resources,” including several Michigan associations. They should be able to help you expand the pool of people you’re considering. Identify 2 or 3 who come with solid recommendations from others who have watched them work. See the Michigan Department of Education MI Excel website for a listing of experienced, state trained and approved coaches who see their work as supporting and building leadership capacity, not pushing any particular strategy or reform approach.
MDE Approved MI EXCEL Leadership and Content Coaches:
http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_30334-103288--,00.html
- 6 Brainstorm a list of questions** you need answered.
INSERT for Step 6 is a “starter set” for you to adapt, based on your situation.
- 7 Use a phone interview** to develop a shared understanding of your situation and ask for a proposal based on that information.
More than one set of ears is helpful, so consider including a district resource person or your school improvement team leader in these conversations. Ask for proposals that cost out separate elements, so that you can select or reject them independently.
- 8 Review and rank proposals.**
INSERT for Step 8 is a beginning matrix for scoring proposals. Add your own criteria and share the decision with other reviewers who bring their own scoring sheets to the discussion. Comparing different impressions are especially useful, as they help surface assumptions and check what “evidence” led you to different conclusions.
- 9 Negotiate conditions** of work for the provider you’ve selected, and document them in a letter.
This workplan may become part of a formal contract executed by the district... or, if it’s an amount small enough to be within your building’s discretionary budget, it may serve as your agreement with the provider. INSERT for Step 9 is a sample letter.

Getting more mileage from using other sources for identified professional development

How choosing and managing an outside “expert” to meet identified needs benefits your school in regard to the following initiatives:

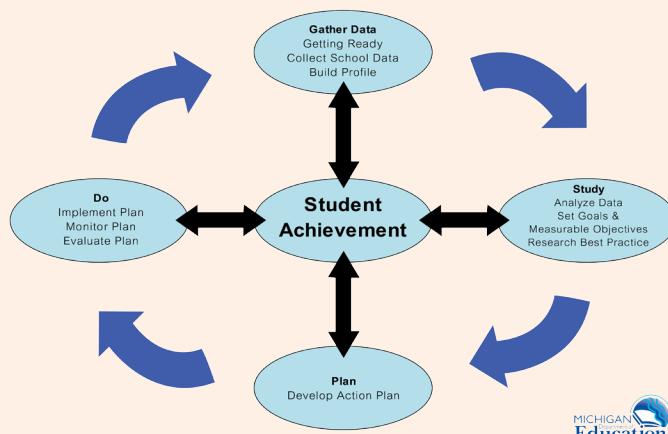
Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

- Job-embedded professional development exemplifies the importance of continuous learning and reinforces the collaborative culture of the building. Schools may identify needs that require outside technical support. The processes in this packet can help ensure those outside resources align with your school’s intention and focus.

State Accreditation System

- According to Michigan School Improvement Law, professional learning programs for administrators and teachers shall emphasize the improvement of teaching and learning of academic core curriculum objectives, the use of data to improve teaching and learning for all students.

Michigan Continuous School Improvement Process (Mi-CSI) Michigan School Improvement Framework



Job-embedded professional development provides staff members the means to examine the improvement of teaching and learning and the quality of their own professional learning. This often results in identifying needs for content or skill-building, which may call for outside expertise collaboration.



Resources

Books, Articles, Websites

Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals

Dennis Sparks. National Staff Development Council.

Dr. Sparks was Executive Director of NSDC for 16 years, and in tribute to his far-seeing vision, NSDC has chosen to publish his book in on-line format. You can download the entire book for free (after a required registration form) at this address:

<http://www.learningforward.org/news/sparksbook/>

“The Principal’s Role in Supporting Learning Communities”

S. Hord & S. Hirsh. Education Leadership 66.5 (2009): 22-23.

Michigan LearnPort

<http://www.learnport.org>

Michigan LearnPort provides online learning solutions for educators: Access high-quality online courses and resources, meet professional development requirements, earn SB-CEUs and more.

MDE Approved MI EXCEL Leadership and Content Coaches

http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_30334-103288--,00.html

People

Specialists

Intermediate School Districts/RESAs can serve as a resource.

Sources below may be able to help you broaden the pools from which you'll select possible providers:

For more information, contact:

Michigan Department of Education

Office of Education Improvement and Innovation
517-241-3147

School Improvement Unit
517-373-8480

Curriculum and Instruction Unit
517-241-4285

Office of Assessment and Accountability
517-373-0048

Office of Early Childhood and Family Services
517-241-3592

Office of Field Services
517-373-3921

Office of Professional Preparation and Teacher Certification
517-241-4546

Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services
517-373-9433

Associations

Michigan Staff Development Council
<http://www.msdconline.org/>

Michigan Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development
<http://michiganascd.org/>

Your District's Professional Development Office

Principals or teacher leaders of other schools like you.

Michigan State Board of Education

John C. Austin, *President*
Casandra E. Ulbrich, *Vice President*
Nancy Danhof, *Secretary*
Marianne Yared McGuire, *Treasurer*
Richard Zeile, *NASBE Delegate*
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Daniel Varner
Eileen Lappin Weiser

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Rick Snyder, *Governor*
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Compliance With Federal Law

The Michigan Department of Education complies with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination, and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education.